THE

AMERICAN MEDICAL INTELLIGENCER.

Vol. I. August 1, 1837. No. 9.

Art. I.—ON PUTRID ANIMAL EXHALATIONS.

BY THE EDITOR.

In discussing the subject of malaria, especially that which gives rise to intermittent and remittent fever, we have affirmed, that such disease is never, perhaps, produced by animal putrefaction, and rarely disease of any kind; that we had practised to some extent in the vicinity of the workshops of the "knackers," whose occupation it is, in the large cities of Europe, to convert the dead horse to various useful purposes,—cats' and dogs' meat, bones for the distillation of hartshorn, &c.;—that although the atmosphere is intolerably fetid to the casual visiter, neither the workmen nor the families around are liable to any malarious, or to any, disorder, which can be fairly referred to that cause;—that, in the year 1828, a committee was appointed, in Paris, to enquire into the circumstances connected with the operations of the knackers, and every one, examined by the committee, agreed, that they were most offensive and disgusting, but no one that they were unwholesome; nay, it was even inferred, that they were conducive to health, as all the men, women, and children, concerned in the works, had unvarying health, were remarkably well in appearance, and strong in body, the workmen commonly attaining old age, and being generally free from the infirmities that accompany it, and when an epidemic fever was in full force, not one of the workmen in the establishment of Montfaucon being affected by it;—that the gut-spinner, whose occupations, prior to the discovery of the disinfecting power of the chlorides, by Labarraque, were most offensive, owing to the putridity of the macerated intestines, enjoyed remarkable health; and, lastly, that although the tainted air of the dissecting room is breathed month after month, and for many months, by hundreds of students in different parts of the globe, no endemic fever is generated.[1]

All these affirmations have been severally confirmed in a recent French publication, by a *hygienist* of distinction.[2] In the first place, as respects the "knackers," or *chantiers d'équarrisage*, the filth and stench of whose operations are described as horribly offensive,—M. Parent-Duchatelet describes the establishment at Montfaucon, to which allusion has been made, as immense; the number of horses taken to it, either dead, or to be killed, being twelve or thirteen thousand annually. The men are described as enjoying the most flourishing health; the women as most fruitful, and

[1] On the Influence of Atmosphere and Locality, &c. constituting Elements of Hygiène, p. 108. Philadelphia, 1835.

[2] Hygiène Publique, par A. J. B. Parent-Duchatelet. 2 tom. Paris, 1836.

the children as pictures of healthful energy. Of the health of the manufacturers he speaks in equally strong terms; and he adds, that the workmen in the *chantiers* were remarkably exempt from disease during the prevalence of cholera in Paris. There were fewer patients admitted into the Hospital Saint Louis, which is situated in the district of the *chantiers*, than into any other hospital of the metropolis.

Lastly, as respects the dissecting rooms, a wide field is afforded in Paris for testing whether they are unwholesome to the students and attendants, or to the inhabitants in the vicinity. In the hospital at which we ourselves dissected, La Pitié, between twelve and fourteen hundred subjects are received annually, and at the *Ecole de Médecine*, about a thousand! but besides these a great number of bodies are used in the dissecting rooms attached to the other hospitals. M. Parent unhesitatingly expresses his conviction, that there is no ground for the belief that the dissecting rooms are *foyers* of morbid emanation. In support of this position he adduces numerous facts, and the decided opinions of Lallemand, Desault, Dubois, Dupuytren, Boyer, and many others; and as regards the effect of the dissecting room on the health of the students and persons attached to and employed in them, his testimony is no less unequivocal. He states, and he brings forward the testimony of M. Andral, M. Lawrence, and others, in confirmation, that there is no disease whatever to which they are liable from exposure to the cadaveric emanations; that gastro-enteritis, meningitis, and typhoid fevers, are very frequent, according to M. Andral, among the students during the first year of their stay in Paris, but these diseases depend so little upon the mere circumstance of dissecting and remaining in the dissecting rooms, that they are more common amongst those who have not begun to dissect. Desault was in the habit of saying that he firmly believed the air of the dissecting rooms had saved him from attacks of epidemic and other diseases, of which those hospital physicians and surgeons, who seldom or never dissected, appeared to be much more susceptible than he.

As a cause, then, of malarious fever, putrid animal emanations cannot, we conceive, be invoked.

Art. II.—ON THE USE OF NUX VOMICA IN GASTRALGIA.

BY DR. M. HUSS.[1]

In the autumn and winter of 1834–5, Dr. Huss was called upon to treat various cases of gastralgia, some of which were the result of attacks of cholera. In most cases the disease was pure neuralgia, but in some it was of an inflammatory character. The most prominent symptoms were—violent gnawing pain in the stomach, with vomiting after taking food or drink, and regurgitations,—sometimes of an acid, at others of a rancid nature. The subnitrate of bismuth, although given in large doses—half a dram in the day—often failed; and, in these obstinate cases, Dr. Huss administered the nux vomica. An oleaginous cathartic was first given, and a sinapism applied over the region of the stomach, after which a grain and a half of nux vomica, with ten grains of magnesia, was prescribed four times a day.

[1] Tidskrift für Lökare och Pharmaceuter, Jul. 1835; s. 262, and Zeitschrift für die gesammte Medicin, von J. F. Dieffenbach, u. s. w. Marz, 1837, s. 393.

Every third day the dose was somewhat increased, but it never exceeded two and a half grains. After the use of these means the patient experienced a sensation of warmth and diminution of the pain in the stomach, and recovered in from eight to twelve days. Constipation was at times occasioned, but this was removed by the use of the oleum ricini.

Art. III.—STATISTICS OF CHOLERA.

BY DR. G. F. MOST, OF ROSTOCK; THE LATE SIR DAVID BARRY, &C.

We extract the following report of the mortality from cholera in certain European cities, from the article "Cholera," of Most's Encyclopädie der gesammten medicinischen und chirurgischen Praxis, u. s. w. The table is compiled from official weekly reports.

W—*weeks.* S—*sick.* D—*deaths.*

W	Petersburg.		Moscow.		Berlin.		Hamburg.		Vienna.		Prague.		Lübeck.		Rostock.	
	S.	D.	S.	D.	S.	D.	S.	D.	S.	D.	S.	D.	S.	D.	S.	D.
1	201	96	225	97	64	36	34	19	765	303	9	6	2	2	24	13
2	1979	838	—	—	163	107	178	88	442	153	25	9	2	1	8	7
3	3492	1772	—	—	336	162	269	138	391	200	69	31	10	6	34	21
4	1655	884	1395	677	217	153	152	91	509	274	329	144	61	41	128	73
5	659	426	1069	617	249	175	108	49	434	226	461	244	311	180	200	97
6	302	217	650	394	251	195	52	32	339	228	272	142	224	138	119	75
7	165	91	594	304	271	164	55	25	326	185	340	126	130	64	65	57
8	80	52	430	203	239	148	26	13	281	126	367	158	172	89	36	20
9	99	40	213	95	135	104	15	8	—	—	338	149	225	108	36	21
10	84	36	144	61	141	84	7	7	—	—	445	134	—	—	17	10
11	41	29	107	75	64	49	5	2	—	—	249	106	—	—	13	2
12	30	10	90	59	36	25	12	5	—	—	234	67	—	—	—	—
13	18	9	88	57	22	11	12	4	—	—	112	42	—	—	—	—
14	—	—	101	65	—	—	6	7	—	—	86	33	—	—	—	—
15	—	—	89	63	—	—	7	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

The above table applies only to the first attack of epidemic cholera in each of the places. The population of the different cities in the year 1831 is thus given in Cannabich's Geographie, 13th edit., 1832:—Petersburg, 446,895; Moscow, 246,545, (and in winter 60,000 more); Berlin, 236,803; Hamburg, 125,000; Vienna, 276,584; Prague, 117,000; Lübeck, 25,000; and Rostock, 19,024; in all, 1,493,851 souls. Of these 20,000 died of this frightful malady in less than two years.

We add,—*Statistics of Epidemic Cholera in England*, from facts furnished by the late Sir David Barry.

The first case of the disease officially acknowledged by the Central Board of Health, occurred in Sunderland, on the 23d of October, 1831.

After Sunderland had continued a whole month to be the only place in Great Britain known to be affected by the disease, two cases were reported from Newcastle upon Tyne, towards the end of November, and from that period may be dated the spread of the epidemic from place to place.

In the daily returns furnished by the central board to the government, made up from those sent in from day to day, by local boards, the cities, towns, and districts, named as infected, on the 15th of each month respectively, during the whole period of the epidemic, stand (in regard to the number of places returned) as follows: (1)—*the metropolis not included.*

The *places* declared *free* from the disease in the intervals between the dates, are not comprehended in these numbers:—

TABLE.

Nos. 2 and 3 exhibit the total number of attacks and deaths in each month, including the metropolis, from November 1831, to 31st December, 1832.

Year.	Month.	1 Places or districts suffering from the epidemic, on the 15th of each month.	2 Attacks.	3 Deaths.	4 Proportion of deaths in each month, out of 100 attacked during the epidemic.
1831	November	1	319	97	0.3
	December	5	697	282	0.9
1832	January	6	2,149	614	2.0
	February	11	2,462	708	2.3
	March	12	3,188	1,519	5.0
	April	19	2,708	1,401	4.5
	May	16	1,700	748	2.4
	June	36	3,579	1,363	4.4
	July	42	12,162	4,816	15.7
	August	52	23,851	8,875	28.6
	September	88	15,616	5,479	17.7
	October	63	9,278	4,080	13.1
	November	23	2,166	802	2.0
	December	8	328	140	0.4
	Totals		80,203	30,924	100.0

Of the 1,200 local boards of health, established by orders in council, only *forty-five*[1] sent in general statistic returns to the central board,—

These returns comprehended a population of 840,662 individuals,

Of whom were attacked . . . . . 10,918, or 1.3 per cent.

" died . . . . . 4,152, or 0.49 per cent.

nearly 1 in 200 of the living.

Of the attacked were children under ten years of age . 2,017

Male adults 4,374

Female ditto 4,527

10,918

DIED.

Children 799

Male adults 1,630

Female ditto 1,723

4,152

Treated in hospitals. 2,419

" in patients' dwellings. 8,499

Died in hospitals 1,137

" in patients' dwellings 3,015

Total deaths 4,152

38.5 per cent. of the cholera patients died; and if the mean duration of the cases was seven days, the intensity of annual mortality would be nearly 2,000 per cent. In the *Prussian State Gazette*, Feb. 19, 1832, it is stated,

[1] In these returns are included Bristol, Bilston, Wolverhampton, Manchester, Oxford, and Sheffield.

that 52, 773 individuals were attacked, and that 30,927 died of cholera in all the Prussian provinces: the mortality of the patients was therefore 58.6 per cent. In *France*, the mean annual mortality in 1825—9, was 2.55 per cent.; in 1832, it was 2.87, an increase of 0.32. Instead of 1 in 39.4, 1 in 35.9 died. The number of deaths when cholera reigned, was 933,733; in the six preceding years the mean was 813,079; so that, allowing for the increased population, cholera carried off at least 100,000 persons, in a population of 32,560,934.[1]

As a medium of comparison we insert the following table of the ratio of deaths to the population and the sick, in some of the cities of this country, in 1832,—as given by Professor Jackson, of the University of Pennsylvania.[2]

Places.	Population	Cases.	Deaths	Ratio of cases to population.	Ratio of deaths to cases.	Ratio of deaths to population.
Quebec	32,000	5783	3292	1 in 5+	1 in 2.5	1 in 10.5
Montreal	28,000	4385	1853	1 6.5	1 2.5	1 15+
New York . . .	140,000	5547	2782	1 25.3	1 2.	1 15.5
Philadelphia . .	160,000	2314	935	1 70.	1 2.5	1 173.2

Art. IV.—ON THE BAD EFFECTS OF EXPOSURE TO THE NIGHT AIR IN MALARIOUS REGIONS.

BY JAMES MEASE, M. D.

Dear sir,—The following account of the deleterious effects of exposure to the malaria of an unhealthy district for a few hours, is a fair *pendant* to the remarks made in a former number of the "Intelligencer."[3] I took down the facts from the mouth of one of the sufferers.

On the 24th August, 1817, five citizens of Philadelphia city and vicinity went to Warton Point, Kent Co., Maryland, on the Choptank river, opposite to Poole's island. They consisted of Timothy Caldwell, Jacob Lybrand, Wm. King,—Hibs, and Giles Briggs. A steamboat conveyed them to Newcastle, Delaware, where they stopped one night, and the next day they proceeded to French Town, on the Elk river, and to the point by stage. They arrived at 10 o'clock, A. M., and remained there until Saturday evening, the 30th August, after sundown, when they repaired to the beach, and made a fire as a signal to Captain Trip to steer to them when coming up from Baltimore in the steamboat. The bank of the river was forty feet high, the beach gravelly, the night clear, with a strong northwest wind, blowing, all the time they remained, over a marsh six miles wide and several miles long. When they left home the sun shone brilliantly and hot, and not adverting to a possible change of weather, they were all clad in summer dresses. Had they been sons of the "Emerald Isle" they would have known, that "any fool might take an overcoat when leaving home in the rain, but that it requires a sensible man to be thus provided when the sun shines." Although they made a "rousing" fire, which the passengers on board the steamboat informed them they saw at the distance of twenty miles, when at the mouth of the Patapsco, they nevertheless felt the penetrating and chilling effect of the moisture from the extensive marsh, and the cool wind to which they were exposed. The boat did not take them up until ten o'clock, and landed them at French Town at one; there they took stage to Newcastle, whence in a steamboat they reached Philadelphia the next day (31st August) at eleven o'clock.

[1] British Medical Almanac for 1836, p. 123.

[2] Cholera Gazette, p. 246, and American Journal of the Medical Sciences, for Nov. 1832.

[3] For June 15th, p. 97.

Timothy Caldwell was the first of the company attacked, viz. On Thursday, the 4th Sept., at 10 A. M., with a rattling chill when half a mile from home, whither he immediately repaired, and was confined with a severe fever, and its effects, for six weeks. Jacob Lybrand, whom he met on the way, was seized with a similar symptom on the Sunday after (Sept. 8th) and was buried that day week. Wm. King died about the same time. Giles Briggs was also attacked but recovered. Hibs died on Tuesday, 16th September.

I recollect another instance of the fatal effects of exposure to the night air of an unhealthy climate, which was mentioned in the newspapers about ten years since. A number of English passengers bound "home" from Calcutta, were detained from some cause at the mouth of the Hoogly, when they resolved to go on shore and have a dance. They did so, but ten or twelve paid the penalty of their imprudence with their lives.

Many similar cases on record could be referred to. Those I now give will be useful to some readers of your journal who may not be aware of the danger they incur by exposure to the causes of disease I relate.

—

Since writing the above paper I met with the following facts in a highly interesting account of the *Ovahs*, a race of people in the interior of Madagascar, by Captain Locke Lewis, of the British army.[1]

"The year before I went to Madagascar, that is, in 1816, Sir Robert Farquhar sent a party of our countrymen, consisting of thirty-two persons, on a mission to Radama. The party arrived safely at the capital, but the day after they were afflicted with a disease producing fainting fits, swellings on various parts of the legs and body, ague and fever, and only eleven returned to relate the sad fate which had befallen their comrades. Three of this number died on their passage to Mauritius, and in six months from the period of the expedition setting out only five were alive, and four of these were in a very sickly state. I may add, that among all who either accompanied me or visited Madagascar during my stay at Mauritius, a period of eight years, only two or three have survived."

I learn, by the way, from the attending physician of the Price family of Harlingen, in New Jersey, three in number, who fell victims to putrid exhalations in October last, that they were all employed in cleansing a well containing but little water, and that very offensive. It is not stated, but we must presume that the solid contents of the well were equally pestiferous. "Mrs. Price was taken ill on the 5th, Price and his daughter on the day following. The symptoms in all were similar. They complained of great distress of the stomach, with retchings, but little vomiting, great heat and thirst, hands and feet cold, pulse small, and not much increased, great prostration of strength, furred tongue, dry and parched, no delirium, some stupor,—evacuations offensive, and affording no relief. Miss P. died on the 10th, Price on the 12th, and his wife the next day."

Neither the foregoing nor those cases related in the previous number of the "Intelligencer," are given as novelties, but merely as cautions for farmers and others to avoid exposure to the malarious influence, or deadly effluvia of marshes, especially in the night, and to the sources of bad air day or night;[2] and considering that *seven human beings* owed their deaths to

[1] Jour. Geogr. Soc. Lond., vol v., part 2d, p. 237.

[2] In malarious regions, the dangers of such exposure are well known, and where the emanations are in a very concentrated state, they are most lethiferous. A few years ago, we attended in Virginia, in consultation, a family from Boston, who were detained on the James river for two or three nights in August, the heat being so great that the cabin windows were compelled to be kept open. The family consisted, as far as we recollect, of six persons, of whom five were attacked with a most pernicious malarious fever; of these, three, the mother and two children, died.

In a recent work, entitled "A Clinical Treatise on the Endemic Fever of the West Indies, intended as a guide for the young practitioner in those countries," by W. G. Evans, Esq., (London, 1837,) the author has given some facts highly illustrative of the concentration and destructive influence of malaria in that portion of the globe.—*Ed.*

the most absurd conduct, in not guarding against the causes of their diseases, it certainly cannot be considered otherwise than important to draw the attention of all to the sources of the deadly influences recorded. Half a bushel of chloride of lime, the expense of which is trifling, if it had been thrown into Price's well, would have so completely destroyed the fœtor of its contents, and so decomposed the putrid effluvia, as to have permitted it to be cleaned with impunity. Greater folly than in the cases just alluded to is seen every winter, committed by persons who perish from the most wanton exposure to fumes of charcoal, which substance they ignite and take into their sleeping apartments to increase their temperature; and not a summer passes without several deaths being announced in the newspapers of others who lose their lives from breathing the same air under a different form, when separated from the atmosphere into which it enters as a component part, and from its greater specific gravity descends into wells they are cleansing out, or into pits intended to form wells. With respect to this gas I will state a fact that I have never seen mentioned, and which is highly worthy of record. This is the sudden formation of it. Before the introduction of the Schuylkill water into the city of Philadelphia, the late Thomas Dixey, a well-known pump-maker, and very respectable man, told me, that he had often known this foul air, or choke-damp, to form during the interval that his men had been absent at dinner from their work, and hence the means of ascertaining whether the air in the wells is respirable or not were always subsequently tried by him whenever he renewed his operations after being once suspended. The never-failing proof of the respirable quality of the air in wells, or brewers' vats,[1] is a lighted candle continuing to burn freely when let down, a precaution which should never be omitted. On this subject, and on the means of freeing wells from the foul air within, I have treated at length in my additions to Willich's "Domestic Encyclopædia," so long ago as the year 1804.

JAMES MEASE.

Chesnut St., July 15, 1837.

ART. V.—PREVENTION OF HYDROPHOBIA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MEDICAL INTELLIGENCER.

Sir,—The notice yesterday in a newspaper of a death from hydrophobia reminds me of a duty I have too long neglected to perform,—to call the attention of the profession to a preventive for this most horrible malady.

I will not pretend to say that it is a perfectly certain antidote, for this I am not warranted in saying; but I can confidently assert, that in six or eight cases of persons bitten by rabid animals, in which I have tried it, in no one of them did hydrophobia follow. My old master in medicine, from whom I received the remedy, always maintained that it was a perfect prophylactic, and he was abundantly skeptical in medicine. He obtained his knowledge of the medicine in question from a quack doctor in or near Norristown, in whose hands it acquired immense celebrity.

I am perfectly aware, that many animals are supposed to be rabid which are not so, and that, even among persons bitten by animals absolutely rabid, hydrophobia may not follow in a majority of the cases, though nothing should be done; yet, making every allowance for these exceptions, it is hardly possible, much less probable, that the remedy should be tried for thirty or forty years, and by three different persons, too, without, as they asserted, a single failure, did it not possess very decided virtues. Independently of these considerations, it is the more worthy of a trial as it does not usurp the place of any remedy of established efficacy, and as it will not interfere with

[1] Two cases of death from men descending into vats to clean them have occurred in Philadelphia within a few years past.—*J. M.*

the exhibition of any other, or every other, means gentlemen may be disposed to adopt.

But while troubling you with arguments I am detaining you from the remedy. It is, then, the turpeth mineral (sub-sulphate of mercury) given in a dose of from one to five grains, according to the age of the patient, and repeated the second day after. The quack doctor, from whom the knowledge of the article is derived, relied on a single dose, and, however long after the receipt of the injury, making no local applications to the wound. He was in the habit, however, of ordering the patient to drink freely of chick-weed (*alsine*) tea; but the virtue, I believe, resided in the mercurial, the chick-weed only served to mystify the patient. A.

July 5, 1837.

Art. VI.—BOTANICAL MEDICINE.

The following history of the "Thomsonian System," as it is called, as well as of its founder, is taken from the "Report of the New Haven County Medical Society," which we noticed in a former number. It shows forcibly on what little foundation a system of empiricism may rest, by which, notwithstanding, thousands of credulous individuals may be daily gulled, to the advantage of few except the too often designing and mercenary pretenders.

"Samuel Thomson, who claims to be its founder, was born in New Hampshire, in 1769.[1] He claims to have discovered his 'emetic weed' (lobelia) when he was four years old. He was brought up to hard work upon a farm. At eight years of age he seems to have taken his first lessons in medicine of an old woman who lived in the neighbourhood of his father's, who was skilled in the use of 'roots and herbs,' and who, he affirms, cured him of canker-rash. He appears to have had no education, not even such as is the privilege of the most destitute nowadays in New England. He early became dissatisfied with the 'regular doctors,' and, consequently, began to prescribe for himself, and subsequently for his neighbours and friends. In 1805, his practice had become so extensive that he found it impossible to attend to his farm, and as he 'had always a very strong aversion to working on a farm,' 'the reason of which he could not account for,' [his own words,] he finally, after 'having maturely weighed the matter,' 'concluded to make use of that gift [his own words again] which I thought nature or the God of nature, had implanted in me; and if I possessed such a gift, I had no need of learning, for no one can learn that gift.' And he 'immediately thought of what St. Paul says concerning the different gifts by the same spirit; one had the gift of prophecy; another, the gift of healing; another, the working of miracles.' After these reflections, he concluded to consecrate his life to the exercise of his 'gift in healing the sick,' (his favourite mode of expression.) Since that period, he appears to have seen much hard and various service, and has spent his time in Portsmouth, Boston, Maine, and other parts of New England. Most of the latter part of his life seems to have been occupied in forming botanical societies, selling his 'family rights,' (the right of using his patent for families,) establishing agencies, and quarreling with his agents, who, by his own account, (doubtless a true one,) have taken every opportunity to defraud him and usurp his honours. . . . . One Horton Howard, an agent for the western country, sold, in three and a half years, eighty thousand dollars worth of rights! In order to get a settlement with him, Thomson was obliged to sacrifice about seven eighths of what should have been coming to him!

"Thomson appears never to have studied medicine at all, in any of its

[1] "Our facts are all taken from his Narrative of his own Life, and New Guide to Health, written by himself, and edited by Abner Kneeland."

branches. All his discoveries he claims to have fished up from the depths of his own understanding; though his knowledge of disease and of remedies (such as it is) has evidently been picked up among the grandmothers and nurses of our country—those living repositories of traditional medical lore, for whom we entertain, of course, a most profound respect. Though very clearly a man of considerable shrewdness, and for aught we know, mainly honest in his intentions, he gives proofs of the most perfect ignorance of what we call medical science. He shows himself entirely unacquainted even with botany, about which his followers make such a flourish. When applying for his first patent in 1813, he was obliged to go to Dr. Mitchell for the botanical names of the plants he used. As it regards anatomy, physiology, pathology, chemistry, &c., they are not even mentioned in his book, except so far as they are understood or *mis*-understood by matrons and nurses. He says not one word from which we may infer that he ever saw the interior of a man. He professes great success in surgery and midwifery, as well as physic, notwithstanding.

"What may be called *Doctor* Thomson's *theory, invented by himself* (we call him *doctor* to show that we are willing to share the honour of the title with any body who claims it), seems to be a mutilated copy of a very ancient one, originally the property of one Hippocrates, (who lived some three thousand years ago,) the remains of which are still to be traced among the medical wiseacres of our land—those skilled in traditional medical knowledge. It had its birth, of course, before the dawn of accurate science. We give the gist of the theory, as *discovered* by Dr Thomson, in his own words.

"'I found, after maturely considering the subject, that all animal bodies are formed of the four elements, earth, air, fire, and water. Earth and water constitute the solids, and air and fire, or heat, are the cause of life and motion. That cold, or lessening the power of heat, is the cause of all disease; that to restore heat to its natural state was the only way in which health could be produced; that the constitutions of all mankind being essentially the same, and differing only in the different temperament of the same materials of which they are composed; it appeared clearly to my mind, that all disease proceeded from one general cause, and might be cured by one general remedy; that a state of perfect health arises from a due balance or temperature of the four elements; but if it is by any means destroyed, the body is more or less disordered. And when this is the case, there is always an actual diminution or absence of the element of fire or heat; and in proportion to this diminution or absence, the body is affected by its opposite, which is cold. And I found that all the disorders which the human family were afflicted with, however various the symptoms, and different the names by which they are called, arise directly from obstructed perspiration, which is always caused by cold, or want of heat; for if there is a natural heat, it is impossible but there must be a natural perspiration.'"

. . . . . .

"'Cold,' the doctor continues, 'is the cause of all disease'—for instance, fever, itch, small-pox, the inflammation which follows a *scald*, salivation from calomel, and, we suppose, broken bones and pregnancy, for we have noticed that Thomsonians steam for both! But if cold is such an enemy to life, how happens it that people should live in Lapland, or why should they die under the equator? But the doctor himself says, in another place, that bad food is a cause of disease, and in another that filth is a cause, and in a hundred other places, that sickness is produced by the 'regular doctors!' On one occasion, he estimates that nine tenths of all the sickness of our country is caused by calomel, opium, antimony, and the lancet! Can it be necessary to say more of Thomson's *theory?*

"Thomson's principal remedies are the following. We prefix the numbers and names by which they are known.—No. 1. Lobelia. No. 2. Capsicum, or red pepper. No. 3. The bark of the root of the bayberry, and the inner bark of the hemlock tree. No. 4. A spirituous infusion of bitter herb,

(balmony,) barberry bark and poplar bark. No. 5. A decoction of poplar bark, bayberry, and peach meats, or cherry stone meats, with sugar, &c. No. 6. High wines, myrrh, cayenne, and sometimes spirits of turpentine. *Composition powder.* Bayberry, hemlock, ginger, cayenne, and cloves. *Nerve powder.* The root of the lady's slipper."

Art. VII.—INFLUENZA.

The Zeitschrift für die gesammte Medicin[1] contains a communication by Dr. D. A. Assing, relative to this epidemic at Hamburg, with accounts of the affection as it exhibited itself in London and Paris, derived from the correspondence of the editors, but we do not think there is any thing worth extracting as an addition to the lecture of M. Andral, published in this number of the "Library." Dr. Assing gives the following comparison between the mortality in January and December 1836, and January 1837. There died in January 1826, 466 persons; in December 1836, 364 persons; and in January 1837, 836 persons.

Ages.		January 1836.	December 1836.	January 1837.
Between	20 and 30	35	28	48
	30 40	35	45	68
	40 50	36	29	58
	50 60	36	38	90
	60 70	55	36	128
	70 80	37	36	117
	80 90	12	10	37
	90 100	4	2	3
	102			1
Diseases.				
Apoplexy,		33	41	67
Inflammation of lungs and pleura,		24	8	165
Catarrhus suffocativus (Stickfluss),		11	9	38
Phthisis pulmonalis,		64	57	151
Marasmus senilis,		48	44	101

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.

Hayward on Diseases of the Knee Joint.[2]

Unlike the generality of orators, Prof. Hayward has chosen a subject of utility, rather than one of display. "A practical object," he remarks, "seems to be most suitable for this occasion. The design of the annual discourse is not so much to impart information as to elicit it; and this can be best effected by treating on some obscure point connected with our profession, and thus exciting further enquiry and observation."

The subjects treated of by Dr. Hayward, are—1. Of inflammation of the synovial membrane. 2. Of morbid change of structure of the synovial mem-

[1] Edited by J. F. Dieffenbach of Berlin, and J. C. G. Fricke, and F. W. Oppenheim, of Hamburg. Band. iv, Heft 4. April 1837.

[2] A Discourse on some of the Diseases of the Knee Joint; delivered before the Massachusetts Medical Society, at their annual meeting, May 31, 1837. By George Hayward, M. D., Professor of the Principles of Surgery and of Clinical Surgery in Harvard University, and Surgeon to the Massachusetts General Hospital. 8vo, pp. 28. Boston, 1837.

brane. 3. Of ulceration of the cartilages. 4. Of the disease of the articulating surfaces of the bones of the knee joint.

They are handled with Dr. Hayward's accustomed ability.

The peroration is a favourable specimen of the author's style.

"Permit me, in conclusion, Mr. President, to congratulate you, and the Fellows of this Society, on the auspicious circumstances under which we have assembled. This institution has been incorporated almost sixty years; and, since its reorganisation, in 1803, it has steadily advanced in prosperity and usefulness. Its members have increased from thirty,—which was the whole number at its establishment,—to almost six hundred; and we may indulge the hope, that, before the return of another anniversary, it will find in its ranks every well-educated physician in this commonwealth.

"It was founded for the purpose of raising the standard of medical education, of elevating the profession, and of guarding the public against the arts of the ignorant and designing. It has no sinister purpose to accomplish, and seeks no other aggrandisement than what it gains by increasing the acquirements and respectability of its members. It is capable of exerting a salutary influence on the community and on the profession; and if it fail to do this, it will be because we do not keep in view the objects for which it was established. It may, for a time, be misrepresented and misunderstood; but if the members are true to themselves, and to the great objects for which it was founded, the benefits which it confers on the public will be felt and acknowledged by all. Let us cling, then, with affection, to our time-honoured society, and, by acting up to its principles, we shall make it an instrument of good to our fellow-men, and a means of advancing the dignity and honour of our profession.

"While there are many agreeable associations connected with this occasion, it cannot fail, also, to bring with it feelings of a melancholy character. Every year takes from us some of our number; and that which has just drawn to a close has called to their final account several esteemed and respected members of our society.

"Some of them had passed long lives with an honourable reputation; and, after having devoted themselves faithfully to the interests of humanity, were gathered in a ripe old age, 'full of years and full of honours.'

"Others were in the vigour of manhood, rich in experience, active, faithful, and intelligent, diligently exerting the powers of their minds, and diffusing their stores of knowledge for the benefit of their fellow-men. In the midst of their usefulness, they were summoned, by an inscrutable providence, at a moment when their lives seemed to be of the most value to the world. And others, again, were called away when they were just entering on the great theatre of life, young and ardent, full of hope and promise; and thus were blasted, in a moment, the fond expectations of anxious friends. While we lament their loss, let us gratefully cherish their bright example and honourable name."

—

Green's Chemical Diagrams.[1]

The author's design in publishing this little volume, as he states in his preface, is to present to the chemical student, by the aid of diagrams, some of the most important changes produced by the reciprocal action of bodies on each other. It is divided into four parts. Part 1. Embracing oxygen and its combinations with elementary bodies. 2. Chlorine and its combinations with elementary bodies. 3. Iodine and its combinations with elementary bodies. And 4. Bromine and Fluorine.

[1] Chemical Diagrams, or concise views of many interesting changes produced by chemical affinity. By Jacob Green, M. D., Professor of Chemistry in Jefferson Medical College. 24mo, pp. 90. Philadelphia, 1837.

To give more interest to his pages, Professor Green has added a few historical facts and some practical remarks on the detection of poisons.

As a companion to more extended treatises on the science—and it is so intended by the author—there can be no question of its value, and we can conscientiously recommend it to the chemical student.

—

M. Chevallier on the Solution of Gravel and Vesical Calculi.[1]

The investigations that gave rise to this essay were suggested by the discussions that have arisen between the lithotomists and lithotritists,[2] which led the author to infer, that whatever might be the mode of operating, and whatever the skill of the operator, a goodly number of those affected with calculi die from the operations undertaken for their removal. M. Chevallier determined to see whether the subject of solvents had been sufficiently examined, and whether fresh researches by the chemists might not be of service. With this object he examined into the merits of various reputed lithonthriptics, and went to Vichy to make experiments upon the water, which is of an alkaline nature, and had recently been recommended by M. Petit, as well adapted for the removal of calculi.

M. Chevallier's main conclusions are as follows:—1. That the action of chemical agents upon calculi have not been sufficiently numerous, and that the interests of humanity require fresh investigations. 2. That simple water taken by the first passages or in the way of injection, possesses a solvent power. 3. That many mineral waters are proper in calculous affections; some by the large quantity of water which the patient takes in this manner, others by the alkaline salts they contain. 4. That lime water forms with uric acid a very soluble salt—the urate of lime; and that it is probable it may act also on phosphatic calculi, either by removing a portion of the uric acid which they contain, and diminishing their density, or by acting also on the animal matter which binds the particles of the calculi together. We should differ, however, largely from M. Chevallier in the latter part of this conclusion. In the case of a phosphatic deposition we should expect nothing but mischief from the administration of an alkali or alkaline earth; the phosphates exist in the urine in health in the state of super-phosphates, and if any alkaline substance should reduce them to the condition of neutral

[1] Essai sur la Dissolution de la Gravelle et des Calculs de la Vessie. Par A. Chevallier, Chimiste, Membre de l'Académie Royale de Médecine, du Conseil de la Salubrité, Professeur Adjoint à l'Ecole de Pharmacie. 8vo, pp. 172. Paris, 1837.

[2] The discussions which have taken place on this subject in France remind us of the controversy of old, regarding the methods of lithotomy of Lecat and Leblanc, between the pupils of these celebrated surgeons.

"Sur la bonté d'un lithotome,
Trois fameux supôts de Saint-Côme
Sont aux prises depuis vingt mois.
Le mien vaut mieux; le mien de même:
Le mien aussi dit un troisième.
D'accord; ils valent mieux tous les trois."

Of which we have attempted the following version:—

"On the value of a lithotome
Three famous supôts of Saint-Côme
For twenty months the point contest.
My own 's the best; nay, mine 's preferr'd,
And mine also exclaims the third.
Ah, well! agreed. They 're all the best."

phosphates, they could not fail to be more largely deposited, the neutral phosphate being insoluble. These remarks apply equally to his conclusion regarding the use of magnesia. 7. That the action of dilute acids is proved to be serviceable, but their adaptation requires much caution. M. Chevallier ought to have stated, that whilst alkalies are serviceable in the uric acid depositions, acids are obviously appropriate in the phosphatic. And, lastly, he thinks the best mode of bringing the agents in contact with the calculi is to inject them into the bladder.

The last sections of the work are "on calculi of the bladder, their characters, and the means of discriminating them."

—

Caldwell on Physical Education, &c.[1]

This reprint of two of his pamphlets, with remarks so complimentary, must be peculiarly gratifying to Dr. Caldwell. We have already expressed our own sentiments respecting the talents and acquirements of that gentleman, and are glad to find that he is properly appreciated elsewhere; for whatever bias there may be in the minds of his British editors on the score of the accordance of their views on phrenological questions, they are remote from those sources of incorrect appreciation which are always apt to exist around an author in his own country, especially if the tenor of his life has been at all chequered. "Dr. Caldwell," says Mr. Combe, "is well known as one of the most clear, forcible, and eloquent writers in the United States; and he is as much distinguished for the depth and soundness of his philosophical views, as for his great talent in expounding them."

—

Puchelt's System of Medicine.[2]

The first volume of this elaborate work, which is on general pathology and therapeutics (allgemeine gesundheits-und Heilungslehre), is in its second edition (Heidelberg, 1835). The remaining volumes are on special pathology and therapeutics (besondre Krankheits-und Heilungslehre).

The classification adopted by the author, is into—1. Diseases of the functions and organs of sensibility. 2. Diseases of the irritable functions and organs. 3. Diseases of the reproductive functions and organs, (the term reproduction, Puchelt employs in a different signification from us; amongst the diseases he reckons gastricism, and the affections of the lymphatic system, of sanguification, nutrition, secretion, and excretion.) 4. Diseases of the productive functions and organs, (sexual diseases.) And 5. Diseases in several parts of the body, (poisoning, venereal diseases, scrofula, rickets, chlorosis, scurvy, &c.)

The work is greatly esteemed in Germany, but it cannot, we think, be

[1] Thoughts on Physical Education, and the true mode of improving the condition of man; and on the study of the Greek and Latin Languages. By Charles Caldwell, M. D. Professor of the Institutes of Medicine and Clinical Practice in Transylvania University. With notes by Robert Cox, and a recommendatory preface by George Combe. 12mo, pp. 190. Edinburgh, 1836.

[2] Das System der Medicin im umrisse dargestellt und vorzüglich seinen Zuhörern gewidmet von Friedr. August Benjamin Puchelt, der Philosophie, Medicin, und Chirurgie Doctor, grossherzogl. bad. Hofrathe, ord. öffentl. Professor der Pathologie and Therapie, u. s. w. 8vo, Band. iv. Heidelberg, 1827–35.

placed in the same rank as many of the works in other departments which have emanated from his countrymen.

Statistics of Suicide. By Dr. Schlegel, *of Meiningen.*

In a recent article on suicide,[1] Dr. Schlegel gives the following table of the proportion of suicides in different parts of Europe, and in three of the cities of this country. It is obviously impossible, however, that the enquiring mind should be satisfied, unless the whole of the data for the table were adduced. So far as it goes, it confirms the views which we expressed on a late occasion,[2] as to the inaccuracy of the idea that Great Britain is *par excellence* the "classic land of suicide."

Russia.	(St. Petersburg),	1 in 416
England.	London in the 18th century,	1 10,572
	" in the 19th "	1 21,491
France.	(Paris, department of the Seine),	1 2,215
Switzerland.	(Geneva),	1 3,714
Germany.	Berlin 1788 to 1797	1 23,066
	— 1798 1807	1 12,917
	— 1813 1822	1 3,312
	Hamburg, . . .	1 4,800
	Leipzig, ...	1 3,143
Italy.	Milan, ...	1 18,021
	Naples, ...	1 27,230
United States.	New York, . . .	1 9,474
	Baltimore, . . .	1 15,696
	Philadelphia, . . .	1 20,000

Granting these numbers to have a certain degree of foundation in truth, it is an interesting, although complicated, enquiry for the physiologist to appreciate, as far as practicable, the causes that can have given rise to the great difference between different years;—for example, in the case of Berlin, in the period between 1788 and 1797, and that between 1813 and 1822, the proportion of suicides being *seven times* greater in the latter case than in the former.

Menstrual Blood.—Professor Retzius, of Stockholm, affirms that he has discovered free phosphoric and lactic acids in menstrual blood, by which, he conceives, the fibrine is kept in solution and prevented from coagulating.[3]

University of Maryland.—The Trustees of the University of Maryland have recently made the following appointments:—Dr. Robert E. Dorsey, of Baltimore county, Professor of Materia Medica; and Dr. M. A. Finley, of Washington county, Professor of the Theory and Practice of Physic. The chairs of surgery and chemistry, and the demonstratorship of anatomy, have yet to be supplied.

Graduates of the University of Virginia.—At the close of the session, on Tuesday, the 4th of July last, the degree of Doctor of Medicine was con-

[1] Zur Kunde einzelner Fälle des Selbstmordes, u. s. w. Journal der practischen Heilkunde, von Hufeland und Osann. Oct. 1836. s. 3.

[2] American Medical Intelligencer, June 15, 1837. p. 105.

[3] Ars Berättelse af Setterblad, 1835. Seite 19; referred to in Zeitschrift für die gesammte Medicin. Marz, 1837. s. 390.

ferred on the following gentlemen: Leroy H. Anderson, of Mobile, Alabama; Alex. W. Bentley, Alabama; Benjamin E. Cobb, Southampton, Va.; Edwin H. Conway, University of Virginia; T. Dupuy, Louisiana; Wm. R. Hacket, Louisa, Va.; Joseph H. Hawkins, Spotsylvania, Va.; Joseph T. Hawkins, Louisiana; Littleton J. Johnston, Northampton, Va.; Hawkins Stone, Stafford, Va.; A. W. Upshur, Northampton, Va.; Overton D. Watson, Albemarle, Va.; Eldred White, Tennessee; David C. Winfree, Manchester, Va.

College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York.—We learn that Dr. Alban G. Smith, recently Professor of Surgery in the Medical College of Ohio, has been appointed Professor of the Principles and Practice of Surgery in this institution, in place of Dr. A. H. Stevens, resigned. The regents have given notice, that they will appoint an Adjunct Professor of Anatomy.

NECROLOGY.

M. Desgenettes.—This distinguished veteran—who was created baron for his medical services in the army, was Professor of Hygiène in the *Faculté de Médecine* of Paris, formerly *Médecin-en-Chef* of the imperial army, and Member of the Institute and of the Académie Royale de Médecine—died in Paris on the 3d of February last. The *Faculté de Médecine*, a deputation from the Institute, and from the *Académie de Médecine*, a great number of *savans* and literati, with the pupils of the *Ecole de Médecine* accompanied his body to the cemetery. Several discourses were pronounced over his grave, and amongst them one by M. Bouillaud in the name of the Faculté. His *Eloge* contained a full biographical sketch of the distinguished deceased.

M. Desgenettes was born at Alençon, in 1762; he was educated at Montpellier, where he graduated in 1789. In 1793, he was appointed *Medecin ordinaire* to the army of Italy. In the year vi., he was appointed chief physician to the army of England, as it was called, but really the army destined for Egypt, and which was subsequently called the army of the East. To Egypt he accompanied it, where he acquired immense honour for his philanthropic exertions during the existence of the plague, and for his courage and devotion, which led him to inoculate himself with the matter of that dread disease, in order, to use his own expression, "that he might reassure the imagination and the tottering courage of the army." It was here, too, when asked by Napoleon to administer deadly doses of opium to the sick to prevent them from falling alive into the hands of the Turks, that he gave the firm reply,—"My duty is to save," ("*Mon devoir, a moi, c'est de conserver.*")

As a reward for his services in Egypt, particularly at Saint Jean-d'Acre, M. Desgenettes was appointed, by the Directory, Adjunct Professor of Medical Physics and Hygiène at the *Ecole de Santé*, since the *Faculté de Médecine*. On his return to France, in 1802, he was favourably received by the first consul, and appointed Chief Physician to the Military Hospital of Paris,

and, eighteen months afterwards, Inspector General of Health to the Army. In 1802, he published his *Histoire Médicale de l'Armee de l'Orient.* In 1805, he was sent to Spain to enquire into the epidemic prevailing at Cadiz, Alicante, and Malaga; and, in subsequent years, he accompanied the victorious arms of his country to Prussia, Poland, &c. In the disastrous retreat from Moscow, he was taken by the enemy, but was set at liberty by the Emperor Alexander. "During the short period of the first restoration," says M. Bouillaud, "he had the honour to suffer, and lost some of his places."[1] In the hundred days, he was named Médecin-en-Chef of the Army, and of the Imperial Guard, and was at the fatal battle of Waterloo. After the hundred days he lost both those places, but in 1819 he was restored to the Council of Health of the Army. In 1822, in an éloge of Hallé, he made use of certain expressions relating to that professor's religious opinions, which gave occasion to some tumult amongst the students, and led to the suppression of the Faculty by the government, but after the revolution of July, he and the other displaced professors who were still alive were restored to their chairs.

M. Desgenettes' contributions to medical literature have not been numerous.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

From the Author.—A Treatise on the Radical Cure of Hernia by Instruments; embracing an analysis of the mechanical properties of the various trusses now in use, a description of the new instruments invented by the author, and general directions to patients for the safe employment of these instruments, with hints to surgeons in their application, &c., with numerous illustrations. By Heber Chase, M. D., Honorary Member of the Philadelphia Medical Society, &c. 8vo, pp. 195. Philadelphia, 1836.

From the Author.—Statistics of the Deaf and Dumb in the state of New York, the United States, and in varous countries of Europe. By T. Romeyn Beck, M. D. (From the Transactions of the New York State Medical Society.) 8vo, pp. 23.

From the Author.—A Narrative of the Dissolution of the Medical Faculty of Transylvania University. By Lunsford P. Yandell. 8vo, pp. 10. Nashville, 1837.

From Professor John B. Beck, of New York.—A Thesis on the Cataract, with some remarks on the eye. By Arthur B. Stout. Presented to the Faculty of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, of New York, for the Degree of Doctor of Medicine, April, 1837. 8vo, pp. 56. New York, 1837.

From Prof. Charles Davis, of Georgia.—Report of the Medical Committee on the Thompsonian System of Practice, in the House of Representatives of the State of South Carolina. December 10, 1836.

A further Enquiry concerning Constitutional Irritation, and the Pathology of the Nervous System. By Benjamin Travers, F. R. S., Senior Surgeon to St. Thomas's Hospital, &c. &c. 8vo, pp. 444. London, 1835.

[1] La Presse Médicale, Fevrier, 1837.